



News

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NEWS RELEASE

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Diane Stuart Named National Violence Against Women Director

Diane Stuart was named Director of the Violence Against Women Office in the U.S. Department of Justice Wednesday. Stuart has served as Gov. Mike Leavitt's Coordinator for Domestic Violence since 1996 and has worked in the domestic violence field since 1989.

The Violence Against Women Office was created in 1995 to lead national efforts to stop domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. It works with U.S. attorneys to ensure federal criminal statutes are enforced and assists the Attorney General in formulating policy related to civil and criminal justice for women. It also administers more than \$270 million in yearly grants to help states, tribes and local communities transform the way criminal justice systems respond to domestic violence.

"They could have chosen anyone in the country for this important job," Gov. Mike Leavitt said. "To those of us who know Diane it is evident why she was chosen. Her skills and background position her perfectly to provide national leadership on these issues."

Stuart, a Lenox, Massachusetts native who has lived in Utah 15 years, ran a domestic violence shelter in Logan and developed the first mobile crisis team in the state that traveled into the field to help domestic violence victims. She also chaired the Utah Domestic Violence Advisory Council, helped develop local coordinating councils around the state and has written reference manuals for clergy and victim advocates.

"Domestic violence is a pattern of recurring behaviors by which one party attempts to control the other Stuart said. "It involves emotional, physical and sexual abuse."

The problem is widespread with Utah's shelters alone receiving nearly 46,000 crisis calls last year.

"I hope to achieve better communication between the federal government and the states and greater accountability from everyone involved in preventing domestic violence," Stuart said. "We need a coordinated effort between government, private non-profits, citizens and society in general to stop domestic violence."

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